UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/52/744/Add.2
29 March 1998
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

Fifty-second session
Agenda item 116

PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1998-1999

Report of the Fifth Committee (Part III)

Rapporteur: Mr. Djamel MOKTEFI (Algeria)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The previous recommendations made by the Fifth Committee to the General Assembly under agenda item 116 appear in the reports of the Committee contained in documents A/52/744 and Add.1.

2. The Fifth Committee resumed its consideration of the item at its 48th, 49th, 51st, 52nd, 54th, 55th, 58th and 59th meetings, on 10, 11, 13, 16, 20, 23, 26 and 27 March 1998. Statements and observations made in the course of the Committee's further consideration of the item are reflected in the relevant summary records (A/C.5/52/SR.48, 49, 51, 52, 54, 55, 58 and 59).

3. In addition to those listed in documents A/52/744 and Add.1, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Reports of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/52/7/Add.4, 7, 9 and 10 and A/52/828);

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on the interim study of the question of honoraria payable to members of organs and subsidiary organs of the United Nations (A/52/699);

(c) Ninth progress report of the Secretary-General on the Integrated Management Information System (A/52/711);

(d) Report of the Secretary-General on the reduction and refocusing of non-programme costs (A/52/758);

(e) Report of the Secretary-General on office accommodation at the Palais Wilson (A/C.5/52/19 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1).

II. CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS

A. Draft decision proposed by the Chairman

4. At the 49th meeting, on 11 March, the Chairman of the Committee orally proposed a draft decision entitled "Interim study of the question of honoraria payable to members of organs and subsidiary organs of the United Nations", which the Committee adopted without a vote (see para. 16, draft decision I).

B. Draft decision A/C.5/52/L.24

5. At the 54th meeting, on 20 March, the representative of Argentina introduced a draft decision entitled "Reduction and refocusing of non-programme costs" (A/C.5/52/L.24), submitted by the Chairman on the basis of informal consultations.

6. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft decision A/C.5/52/L.24 without a vote (see para. 16, draft decision II).

C. Draft decision A/C.5/52/L.23 and Rev.1

7. After the adoption of the decision, statements in explanation of position were made by the representatives of Japan, Indonesia (on behalf of the Group of 77 and China), the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Kingdom (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the European Union) and Cuba (see A/C.5/52/SR.54).

8. At the 54th meeting, on 20 March, the Chairman of the Committee introduced a draft decision entitled "Office accommodation at the Palais Wilson" (A/C.5/52/L.23), which read:

> "The General Assembly:
>
> "(a) Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the office accommodation at the Palais Wilson,[1] the comments and observations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions[2] and the oral statement made by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on 16 March 1998;
>
> "(b) Approves the proposal of the Secretary-General to accept the offer of the Swiss authorities to place the office accommodation at the Palais Wilson in Geneva at the disposal of the United Nations;

---

[1] A/C.5/52/19 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1.

[2] A/52/7/Add.4.

"(c) Notes that the cost estimates of the move to the Palais Wilson would amount to 5,805,000 United States dollars of which the contribution from the Government of Switzerland would amount to 3,846,000 dollars, and the balance of 1,959,000 dollars would be covered from existing resources available for the provision of accommodation at Geneva and thereby no additional resources would be required for the biennium 1998-1999, and that no resources would be diverted from any other approved budgetary allocations;

"(d) Urges the Swiss authorities to ensure the extension of the rent-free arrangement beyond the year 2000, and requests the Secretary-General to continue his efforts in this regard;

"(e) Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session a cost-benefit analysis on the use of the conference rooms at both the Palais des Nations and the Palais Wilson."

9. At the 58th meeting, on 26 March, following informal consultations, the Chairman of the Committee introduced a revised draft decision (A/C.5/52/L.23/Rev.1) and orally revised operative paragraph (f), which had read:

"(f) Also requests the Secretary-General [to request the Office of Internal Oversight Services] to submit to the General Assembly at its next resumed fifty-second session, a cost-benefit analysis on the use of the existing conference facilities available at the Palais des Nations in Geneva",

to read:

"(f) Decides that a cost-benefit analysis on the use of the existing conference facilities available at the Palais des Nations in Geneva shall be submitted to the General Assembly at the next part of its resumed fifty-second session."

10. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft decision A/C.5/52/L.23/Rev.1 as orally revised without a vote (see para. 16, draft decision III).

D. Draft decision proposed by the Chairman

11. At the 58th meeting, the Chairman orally proposed a draft decision entitled "United Nations International Partnership Trust Fund", which the Committee adopted without a vote (see para. 16, draft decision IV).

E. Draft resolution A/C.5/52/L.32

12. At the 59th meeting, on 27 March, the representative of Argentina introduced a draft resolution entitled "Integrated Management Information

System" (A/C.5/52/L.32), submitted by the Chairman on the basis of informal consultations.

13. Also at the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.5/52/L.32 without a vote (see para. 15).

14. After the adoption of the resolution, statements in explanation of position were made by the representatives of Egypt, Japan and Cuba (see A/C.5/52/SR.59).

III. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE

15. The Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Integrated Management Information System

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 43/217 of 21 December 1988,

Having considered the ninth progress report of the Secretary-General on the Integrated Management Information System[3] and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions,[4] as well as the report of the Board of Auditors on the updated special audit of the Integrated Management Information System,[5]

1. Notes the difficulties inherent in the implementation of the Integrated Management Information System project;

2. Expresses concern that the magnitude and complexity of the Integrated Management Information System project was underestimated from its inception;

3. Also expresses concern that the recommendations of the Board of Auditors contained in its report of 21 November 1994 on the special audit of the Integrated Management Information System project[6] have not been fully implemented;

4. Expresses its deep concern at the findings of the Board of Auditors as contained in its report on the updated special audit;[5]

---

[3] A/52/711.

[4] A/52/828.

[5] A/52/755, annex.

[6] A/49/680.

5. Endorses the observations and recommendations of the Board of Auditors contained in its report on the updated special audit;

6. Takes note of the corrective actions taken by the Administration concerning the recommendations made by the Board of Auditors;

7. Requests the Secretary-General to take immediate action for the full implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors and to report thereon to the General Assembly at the main part of its fifty-third session;

8. Expresses its deep concern about the time and cost overruns for the completion of the project;

9. Requests the Secretary-General to ensure strict adherence to the Financial Rules and Regulations of the United Nations in matters concerning control over expenditure on the Integrated Management Information System project, with particular reference to contractual costs, and to ensure that adequate administrative support is provided for the project in accordance with the recommendations of the Board of Auditors in paragraphs 25 and 27 of its report;[5]

10. Also requests the Secretary-General to determine the contractor responsibilities in the changes of the Integrated Management Information System in order to limit unnecessary payments by the administration;

11. Further requests the Secretary-General to entrust the Office of Internal Oversight Services with conducting a comprehensive analysis of the reasons for the increase in costs of the contract and to submit its analysis to the General Assembly no later than the end of the main part of its fifty-third session;

12. Requests the Secretary-General to have a forward-looking study of the system conducted by independent experts to be financed by available resources of the Department of Management, without affecting the implementation of its mandate, and to submit it to the General Assembly, together with his comments, through the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, no later than the end of the main part of the fifty-third regular session; the purpose of the independent study will be:

(a) To assess the system from a technical point of view, both in terms of design and operations, taking into account the specific requirements of the United Nations;

(b) To advise on the long-term maintenance and operational requirements of the system in terms of the number and qualifications of staff, infrastructure and communications;

(c) To advise on possible strategies for improving the system and optimizing maintenance costs;

13. Also requests the Secretary-General to include in his tenth progress report a detailed plan of action and the final level of resources needed to

resolve all outstanding problems to make the Integrated Management Information System fully operational, taking into account the main observations of the two above-mentioned reports;

14. Further requests the Secretary-General to reduce the dependency on the current contractor by limiting additional work to the minimum required to facilitate the implementation of the system at offices away from Headquarters and to take the necessary measures to have additional work performed by staff or by a contractor selected after competitive bidding;

15. Calls upon the Secretary-General to ensure that a comprehensive programme for Integrated Management Information System training is included as part of the ongoing training programme offered to staff at all duty stations concerned;

16. Requests the Secretary-General to ensure that adequate and qualified staff are assigned to the implementation and operations of the system at all duty stations.

* * *

16. The Fifth Committee also recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft decisions:

DRAFT DECISION I

Interim study of the question of honoraria payable to members of organs and subsidiary organs of the United Nations

The General Assembly:

(a) Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on an interim study of the question of honoraria payable to members of organs and subsidiary organs of the United Nations;[7]

(b) Endorses the observations made by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions;[8]

(c) Decides to consider the comprehensive report of the Secretary-General on this question at its fifty-third session.

---

[7] A/52/699.

[8] A/52/7/Add.7.

DRAFT DECISION II

Reduction and refocusing of non-programme costs

The General Assembly decides to defer consideration of the report of the Secretary-General on the reduction and refocusing of non-programme costs,[9] together with the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions,[10] pending the submission of the detailed report of the Secretary-General on the sustainability of the development account, the modalities of its implementation, the specific purposes and associated performance criteria for the use of resources, as requested by the Assembly in paragraph 24 of its resolution 52/12 B of 19 December 1997, to the second part of its resumed fifty-second session.

DRAFT DECISION III

Office accommodation at the Palais Wilson

The General Assembly:

(a) Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on office accommodation at the Palais Wilson,[11] the comments and observations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions[12] and the oral statement made by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on 16 March 1998;

(b) Approves the proposal of the Secretary-General to accept the offer of the Swiss authorities to place the office accommodation at the Palais Wilson in Geneva at the disposal of the United Nations;

(c) Notes that the cost estimate of the move to the Palais Wilson would amount to 5,805,000 United States dollars, of which the contribution from the Government of Switzerland would amount to 3,846,000 dollars and the balance of 1,959,000 dollars would be covered from existing resources available under section 27F of the programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999 for the provision of accommodation at Geneva;

(d) Expresses appreciation to the Government of Switzerland for its offer to grant rent-free accommodation at Palais Wilson to the year 2000;

(e) Requests the Swiss authorities to ensure the extension of the rent-free agreement beyond the year 2000, and invites the Secretary-General to

---

[9] A/52/758.

[10] A/52/7/Add.10.

[11] A/C.5/52/19 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1.

[12] A/52/7/Add.4.

continue his efforts to have the assurance of the Swiss authorities in that regard;

(f) Decides that a cost-benefit analysis on the use of the existing conference facilities available at the Palais des Nations in Geneva shall be submitted to the General Assembly at the next part of its resumed fifty-second session;

(g) Also decides to consider the proposal to build two additional conference rooms at the Palais Wilson in the light of the above-mentioned report;

(h) Further decides to consider the issue of office accommodation at its fifty-fourth session in the light of the decision to be taken in respect of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction.

DRAFT DECISION IV

United Nations International Partnership Trust Fund

The General Assembly takes note of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the United Nations International Partnership Trust Fund,[13] and requests the Secretary-General, taking into account the comments made in the Committee,[14] to report to the General Assembly, on a regular basis, on the activities of the Trust Fund and other related matters.

---

[13] A/52/7/Add.9.

[14] See A/C.5/52/SR.56.